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Helps for

Home

Nursing



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HELPS FOR HOME NURSING

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FOR

HOME NURSING

BY

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CHICAGO
CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY
175 DEARBORN STREET
1891



WY

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CHICAGO

TO
S. B. L.
IN MEMORY OF
OUR PATIENT BELOVED
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS INSCRIBED
AND IS SENT ON ITS MISSION
NOT SO MUCH TO CARRY NEW THOUGHTS
AS TO BRING TOGETHER IN CONVENIENT FORM
SUGGESTIONS FOR THE RELIEF OF
THE SUFFERING

CONTENTS

THE INVALID'S ROOM.....	9
VENTILATION	19
SLEEP.....	25
NOURISHMENT	35
ADDITIONAL RECIPES	47
MOVING AN INVALID	57
HINTS TO THE NURSE.....	67
A WORD TO VISITORS.....	77
DIVERSIONS	81
CONVENIENCES	91
SUGGESTIONS	97
A SELECTION.....	III



THE INVALID'S ROOM

HELPS FOR HOME NURSING

THE INVALID'S ROOM

Have it the brightest one in the house. In cases where it is permitted, throw open the blinds and let in the sunshine. Light purifies, and is only second in importance to fresh air.

Allow no gloomy look nor bitter word to enter. Outside this door the husband should leave his business cares, the wife her many anxieties, and the children be permitted to enter only with smiles. "A cheerful heart doeth good like a medicine," should be written where every nurse and relative may read it.

Bring in bright flowers, and hang on the wall pictures that can be *distinctly seen* by the invalid. In cases of protracted illness, it gives pleasure to occasionally exchange these for others.

An open fire-place is preferable to any other method of heating, as it is cheery and also aids in securing perfect ventilation.

It is well to have a thermometer in the room, as people in general are so uneven in feeling that it is not best to trust to any one's judgment. A temperature of about seventy degrees should be maintained.

If possible, the bed should be a mattress of the best hair, over springs; with always a tidy under the sheet. Indeed, no bed, under any circumstances, should be without this, as it can be washed, and so keeps the mattress pure. Over good springs, a thin mattress is comfortable. It can be made at home, of unbleached cotton cloth, at small expense. By having an extra cover, the hair can be picked over, and a sweet, clean bed be given the patient in a few hours.

Have woolen blankets, soft and clean, and never allow in the sick-room what some house-

keepers are proud of calling "a pair of blankets." As soon as purchased they should be cut apart and the ends finished off. Only so can they be properly washed and conveniently used. If warmer covering is needed, let it be a comforter of cheese-cloth, filled with the best quality of cotton.

In hot weather, pillows filled with hair are cooler than feather ones.

No floor covering is so nice for a sick-room as a straw matting. With a bag of heavy toweling drawn over a broom, it can be swept without dust rising, and may be washed occasionally with salt water.

Beside the bed should be a stand with a dainty cover, on which is placed a call-bell, and whatever the patient may need. It is still more convenient with drawers for paper, pencil, scissors, etc. Any drink, as well as the medicines, should be closely covered.

In summer the room will be made much

cooler by having awnings at the windows, or the blinds arranged by patent fastenings in that way. Bowing the blinds with a hook and staple increases the ventilation.

Screens are indispensable—before the windows, protecting from draft, or between the bed and door, thus saving the annoyance of seeing the passers-by. If not convenient to have fancy screens, a slight frame can be readily put together on feet, and a bag of cretonne, made to fit, slipped over it. If cross-pieces are put on the frame, it can be used for drying towels, etc., by removing the cover. When not even this could be had, great comfort has been given an invalid by hanging a curtain over a wire stretched across the room.

The following is a good suggestion: "Get a screen of two panels—for that will show the pictures off to better advantage than one of three—cover the upper part with some strong material, of a solid, neutral color, such as will

make a good background, stretch it tightly, and hide the edges by gimp or molding. On this pin photographs, and be careful not to put on too many, or they will confuse one another. As pictures on the lower part would be too far below the eye to be well seen, put in curtain rods, and hang in full folds some material in harmony with the background of the upper part, but made richer in design and color. It must not, however, be so rich as to distract attention from the pictures above. Treated in this way, a screen may be a source of great pleasure to the eye, and at the same time serve its original purpose of comfort or concealment, and the expense and work would be comparatively small.

“In an invalid's room, especially, such a panel or screen as has been described would be a source of great pleasure.”

Another convenience for any room is a shoe-bag on the inside of the closet door. It can be made with sixteen pockets, which will not

be too many for the things so often needed—slippers, bits of linen, flannel, etc.

In summer a netting is always required. Those from the ceiling are probably the best, putting patient's stand inside; but these are often in the way of the nurse. A simple device is to curve a long reed, springing the ends into screw-eyes on each side the head-board. This is covered with netting and edged with a long frill reaching the bed. To keep it up, a tape must be fastened to center of reed, attached to a hook in top of head-board. Another plan is to cut off from an old umbrella the end and all the silk except a strip to hold the points together. Cover this strip with a double band of pink or blue cambric, and put over all a piece of netting sufficiently large to fall on the bed when the frame rests on its side. It is prettier to trim the corners, making the netting round.

Cut flowers should be taken from the room

at night, and can be best kept in a refrigerator. Growing plants are wholesome and a source of interest. Outside window-boxes are enjoyed by an invalid, as they can often be reached by one confined to a chair.

There should always be an easy-chair and foot-rest for the nurse, and, if possible, a lounge on which she can rest when opportunity offers; still better is a cot with covering of cretonne, which can be used at night, as the nurse should never sleep on the bed with the patient.

A commode, either in box or chair form, is necessary for an invalid or an aged person. The vessel should not be left open in any sleeping-room; the best cover is a piece of round zinc, as it is noiseless and does not retain odors.

In selecting wall-paper for a sleeping-room, one should avoid set figures, as an invalid is often annoyed by counting them, arranging them in groups, etc.; and the old paper should be removed before putting on new.

VENTILATION

VENTILATION

Too much care cannot be given to have the air of the room as fresh as possible, and yet not allow the patient to be chilled. It is nature's best tonic not only for the sick one, but in keeping up the strength of the nurse, whose health should be considered in this respect, as well as in arranging for needed rest and providing good food—the latter especially when night-watching is required.

In some cases the invalid can be covered warmly, face and all, while the windows are thrown open and the air of the room purified.

But arrangement should be made to secure a constant supply of fresh air, which may be done by opening the windows a small space both top and bottom, creating a circular draft not felt far from it; or a piece of flannel, the

four corners fastened before the open part of a window, is a safeguard in any sleeping-room.

Another device is to close the bottom sash on a strip of wood a few inches wide. This leaves an opening between the sashes, and the air, passing up as it enters, will scarcely be felt by the most delicate person sitting beside it.

It has been truly said that the pleasantest odor about a person is the absence of all odors, and it is well when this can be attained in a sick-room, although it is not always possible. Dried apple and orange parings, or coffee on hot coals, throw out an agreeable perfume; but the best disinfectant is Hubbard's Deodorizer and Germicide, which, being used with an atomizer in the room, is invigorating to patient and nurse as well. This may be obtained in Boston, and of it "The New England Gazette" says: "This deodorizer has connected with it more or less perfume, which

to most people is decidedly agreeable, and which is in striking contrast to the utterly vile odors of chloride of lime and carbolic acid preparations, which are far worse than most smells they are used to cover up. Perhaps if it could be made entirely odorless, it might suit some critics better; but I have never seen any of the so-called odorless deodorizers able to perform half the work that this does."

When an invalid must be left alone at night, a little ingenuity can, in almost any case, arrange the door with screw-eyes, and a cord fastened to the bed, so that it can be closed at pleasure.

SLEEP

SLEEP

“Tired Nature’s sweet restorer,” like a maiden coy, must have the gentlest wooing. No exciting talk or book, no discussions or telling of unpleasant news, must trouble the time of her coming.

An amusing account is given of a nurse who put her patient to sleep by reading “Lives of the Saints,” in a monotonous, sleepy tone.

Let preparations for the night begin early, and the room be darkened, so that, if possible, the sick one may have sleep in the best hours before midnight. No visitors should be admitted after nightfall, but, when it can be so, at nine o’clock the lights should be out and the household at rest, for the knowledge that no noise will disturb is soothing to the tired nerves of the patient. A taper or a candle is

better than a lamp. A kerosene lamp should *never be turned low*, as the gas thus emitted is poisonous.

If it is necessary for the nurse to watch the clock, unless it can be an illuminated one, have the light hidden from the patient. A thoughtful physician entering a room where a glare of gaslight was in the invalid's face, took a newspaper and slipped in a hair-pin which he bent and hung over the globe. It has been well said, "Sleeping in a light room, one sleeps lightly."

Where one is confined to the bed, changing the clothing and also the covering at night is conducive to sleep, and removes the impurities thrown off from the body. Sponging with warm water, to which is added whisky, soda, or vinegar, or a gentle dry rubbing with the hand or a Turkish towel is also beneficial. Sleep is sometimes induced by binding a wet cloth over the forehead and eyes, or having

the pillow higher than one is accustomed to.

A cup of hot bouillion or hot milk, sipped slowly, but while still hot, before going to bed, is a better sleep-inducer than all the opiates in the pharmacopœia—better even than a clear conscience, which isn't very good ethics, you know, but which may be very good medical doctrine, notwithstanding, says an Albany physician. The hot fluid taken into the stomach brings about an increased activity of the blood-vessels of the stomach—a slight temporary congestion, which relieves the overcharged blood-vessels in the brain, and so induces a natural and refreshing sleep. To give this remedy its utmost potency, however, no food should be taken with it—not even a tiny wafer—and the liquid should be sipped as hot as can be borne.

If the feet are not warm, wash them off with cool water, rub briskly, wrap in flannel, and, if needed, have a hot-water bag. If there

is pain in the bowels, a flannel wet with alcohol is soothing.

As a rule, a sick person is not to be wakened for medicine, although there are cases when it is needful to rouse one, both for medicine and nourishment; but this should never be done unless by special orders of the physician.

In using coal, it can be done silently if put in paper bags before being brought to the room.

There should be no creaking or slamming doors, nor rattling windows, and no knocking to inquire how the patient is. Let it be understood that, when the signal for sleep is given, nothing short of fire should disturb the quiet. If it is imperative that converse be held with the attendant, slip in a note. How often has a sick person fallen into a nap, to be awakened by an opening door or a *whispered* conference!—the balmy moment has passed, and the coy blessing departed for that day.

A delicate person, or one inclined to be wakeful, often requires nourishment before retiring for the night. A glass of warm milk is excellent, with bread or crackers if desired. A morning nap can often be induced, when one wakes early, by taking a glass of milk, which is better warm, or only a cup of hot water.

Children should be trained never to rouse their parents or disturb each other during the morning sleep, and some parents would do well to return the compliment to their children.

Give the boys a place down-stairs where they can leave their heavy shoes when they come in for the evening; this will insure quiet in the morning.

Where any one is obliged to rise before the hour for waking the household, great care should be taken not to disturb the others. Many a person who would not steal another's

pocket-book, will, without the least consciousness of doing an injustice, rob one of sleep—and yet in many cases the former would be the smaller loss, for no one can estimate the blessing of sleep, nor the serious consequences which may follow the loss of it. A parent who is tried by the irritability of a child would do well to ask himself whether, by providing a comfortable bed, good ventilation, and quiet, he has done all he could to give the nine hours sleep which the best thinkers say a child requires.

As every mother is better for having a nap during the day, children when quite young can be taught that they must at that time be quiet and not speak to her unless *absolutely necessary*. The father can encourage this by talking to the children—particularly the boys—telling them sleep will make the dear mamma live longer. Show a shabby cloth suit, and impress on their minds, as a witty writer puts it, that

“Even our clothing is robbed of its beauty when it loses its nap.”

And so, with the quiet of the night, a darkened room in the morning, soft shoes, a house hushed for the sake of the sick one, may we give to our beloved sleep.

NOURISHMENT

NOURISHMENT

When there is a sick person in the home, the first thought at table should be for that one; indeed, it is better to have such meals served before the family are called together.

The tray should have a dainty cover and delicate china, with, if possible, a few fresh flowers, as these add much to the relish with which the food is received. *And let it be hot.* Never send soup in an open plate, but in a covered bowl from which it may be poured if desired. Heat the plates, and have hot saucers to cover them. Have a tiny pot with hot tea or coffee, freshly made, letting the patient see the cream and sugar put in, and it will be better enjoyed. The habit of pouring a cup of tea and carrying it through the house, expecting it to be relished, is absurd. Keeping

in the room napkin, salt, sugar, vinegar, etc., will save delay. Salt in this bottle, as in all used for the table, should be mixed with one-tenth part of corn-starch—this absorbs the moisture and prevents hardening.

Never leave food in a sick-room.

Study to have a varied bill of fare. If cereals are taken, make a change—Wheatena, Farina, Oatmeal, Rice, Barley, Cerealine, etc. Should they be preferred cold, they may be put in cups and turned out in forms.

A clever idea for serving meat, where the appetite is capricious, is to have one day a chop with a slice of lemon on top, or a bit of parsley; another day the tenderloin of steak or beef chopped fine by the butcher, seasoned, made in cakes and broiled, which, for variety, may be covered with mashed potato and browned in the oven five minutes; or delicate slices of roast beef with a piece of dry bread dipped into the dish-gravy.

Broil a chop five or six minutes, turning it frequently, and serve it *at once*. Pigeon, snipe, and quail, or tender spring chicken, are relished by convalescents.

The most delicate way of serving an orange is to cut a piece of skin from the blossom-end, and, with a pointed knife, take out the core, letting the patient draw the juice, while the nurse removes the seeds as they come up; or cut the orange crosswise, and with a-coffee-spoon take out the pulp.

Prunes are not generally appreciated. They are easily digested, will be accepted by the stomach when nothing else will, and are often given by physicians as a remedy for inflammation of the stomach, for their soothing, cooling properties. They should be first soaked in cold water and stewed until *very soft*.

Currant jelly in water is relished by a feverish person; tamarinds and barberries may be used in the same way.

In making toast-tea, brown the bread thoroughly and cover with cold water; this will not, like hot, be absorbed into the bread. If there is nausea, make the surface of bread black.

Buttermilk is excellent for weak stomachs, as it aids digestion. In churning, the first process of digestion is gone through with, so that it can be freely indulged in.

Milk should be drank as slowly as possible; it may be fresh from the cow, or scalded, or ice-cold, to suit the fancy of the sick one. Lime-water may be added, one teaspoonful to a cup of milk, or a thorough beating of the milk with a fork, breaking the oily particles, will cause it to digest more easily.

Rennet custard is very delicate, and often relished when one tires of drinking milk. It can be quickly made by placing in a bowl of hot water a cup of cold milk, with which is stirred a small teaspoonful of liquid rennet;

sugar, wine, or any flavoring may be added. Place near the fire until it stiffens.

Mellin's Food, Prepared Barley, and Imperial Granum are excellent. The latter, made without milk, has been retained by infants with Cholera Infantum when all else was rejected.

Ice-cream is allowed in almost any case, and ice is very refreshing. The ice may be crushed in a towel, or broken by a rolling-pin, and if put in a soup-plate covered by another, and these placed between two pillows, it will last a long time even in a warm room.

Finely broken ice may be kept by the bedside by having an open-mouthed pitcher half full of cold water. Over the top tie a large piece of heavy flannel, pressing it down into the pitcher to hold the ice, but not to touch the water. The corners may be turned up over the ice

Irish moss, well washed, stewed in water,

strained, sweetened, and flavored with lemon, is excellent, eaten hot, for a cough. A little moss boiled in milk until it stiffens, flavored and poured in cups, makes a delicate and nutritious jelly.

Mint-tea is excellent for a sick stomach.

Give no solid food to a fever patient. Give food at frequent intervals and in small quantities. Let a fever patient have all the milk he wants to drink. Give every two hours a tea-cupful of milk if it agrees with him. Solid food given during convalescence will often cause a relapse.

When but little food can be taken, it is a good plan to have a pitcher of iced milk, and when the patient complains of thirst give this instead of water.

In scarlet fever the food should be taken cold. Iced milk, iced barley-water, and other cool drinks will agree better than warm food.

As pork and veal are not considered good for

the healthy, they should never be given to sick people, and, as far as possible, beef-dripping and butter may be used instead of lard.

It is economy, and renders the meat more nutritious and digestible, to have it rare.

Always use the broiler rather than the frying-pan for meat; if necessary to use the latter, have it free from grease, and quite hot.

Grains, and especially bread, can scarcely be cooked too much.

Bread should not be eaten until twenty-four hours after it is baked, as the gases it contains will not pass from it in less time.

For toast use stale bread—baker's is best—and let it brown slowly, so that there will be no moist part inside, as this is indigestible. To avoid this it is sometimes necessary to dry the bread in the oven before toasting it.

Well-made toast will keep for some time if put in a *paper* bag and hung in a *dry* place. This is ready to use if needed at night, and

often avoids delay in the preparation of a meal.

Apples and potatoes are best when baked; potatoes should be roasted in the ashes.

Fresh *strong* coffee and boiling milk in equal parts, sweetened, is delicious. A well-beaten egg may be put in a cup, and this poured over it, and it will be relished by a patient who has lost desire for food.

Only a small quantity of anything should be placed at once before an invalid.

Many a delicate appetite that would reject a quart of gruel or soup, brought in a bowl of common delf, would be tempted by a pint, served in a pretty bowl, with a bright spoon and a saucer into which a little may be poured.

Some persons have a way of tasting a dish before offering it; this is quite enough to take away one's desire for it.

If the patient turns from the food with aversion, do not urge it, but try next time to

have something more tempting. Next to sleep, good nourishment is the best restorative—better than tonics or stimulants; and in convalescence it is of great importance that the food should be relished.

Never ask a sick person what he would like, as the desire for a dish is often destroyed by long thinking of it. If a wish is expressed for anything, get it if possible; if not, let each meal be a surprise.

If one objects to all this detail, it should be considered that it is no small matter to coax a diseased and weakened body back to life, and no effort should be spared that will accomplish this.

ADDITIONAL RECIPES

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Broth: "The neck part of mutton is the best for making broth. Trim off the surplus fat, and to a pound of the lean (with bone added) put a quart of cold water; simmer gently for two hours, strain, and let it become cold. When wanted, remove every particle of fat, put a small quantity in a saucepan and allow it to become quite hot; salt slightly, and put a red-pepper pod in for a moment. Have ready a small quantity of boiled rice; add it to the broth, and let it stand a few moments before serving. A small piece of onion is sometimes added to the meat when first cooked, to destroy the peculiar mutton flavor which is so objectionable to some patients."

Chicken-broth may be made in the same way, adding celery. For either one, the rice

may be cooked separately or with the meat.

Beef-tea: Many directions are given for making beef-tea. This is the simplest: Cover with water the meat which the butcher has cut in pieces, not chopped. Set it aside for several hours; then let it heat slowly and be taken off and strained before it comes to a boil. An economical cook will add fresh water to the meat and make a cup of fairly good beef-tea.

Never let beef-tea boil. Always begin with cold water. To "warm up" beef-tea, put it in a cup and set the cup in boiling water.

"Beef Juice: Have the dealer cut a thin slice of rump steak, remove the fat and singe the outside slightly, then scrape it with a knife into shreds. With hot water warm the beef-press or a lemon-squeezer and press out the juice into a cup. Place the cup in warm water and allow the juice to become quite

.

warm, adding a little salt. This may be taken in a spoon or poured on pieces of bread."

Clam broth can often be taken where all other food is rejected. It is considered better to boil them whole, as the lime of the shell is beneficial. Milk may be added, and rolled cracker, if desired.

Codfish is often relished after being soaked in water for a few minutes, and picked fine, or stewed in thickened milk, after being soaked all night to extract the salt. It should be cut in *thin* slices crosswise of the grain of the fibers. A beaten egg may be added.

A piece of smoked salmon or salt codfish well freshened in warm water, dried in a napkin, delicately broiled and served hot, will sometimes be relished when nothing else will, and is recommended by physicians as a stimulant to the appetite of convalescents.

Eggs may be prepared in a variety of ways—omelet, scrambled, poached on toast, baked,

etc. The white will be stiff and the yolk soft, if covered with boiling water and placed for eight or ten minutes where it will be hot, but not boil. Hard-boiled eggs should be in water, bubbling hot, at least thirty minutes, as they are then more easily digested than when boiled for a shorter time. The yolk of an egg, beaten with milk and sugar, with the white in a stiff froth on top, or the white alone beaten with sugar, is nourishing.

Eggnog: One egg, one tumbler of milk, one dessert-spoonful brandy, one dessert-spoonful sugar. Beat the egg until not stringy, add the sugar, then the milk, and last stir in the brandy.

Clabbered Milk: Few persons realize what a delicious dessert this is when served with sugar and cream. Skimmed milk should be set aside in a covered dish of *glass or china*, and as soon as it becomes solid should be put on the ice and served from the dish

in which it has turned, before it becomes tart and tough, or separates into curd and whey. It is very nutritious and digestible. Begin with a small quantity—a teaspoonful at a time carefully taken out—and gradually a taste for this very useful food can be acquired.

Crackers are delicious if toasted and buttered, or cooked in water and served with cream.

Cracker Panada: Six Boston crackers, two tablespoonfuls white sugar. Split the crackers and pile in a bowl in layers, the sugar and a little salt scattered among them. Pour enough *boiling* water on them to cover them, and set on the hearth, closely covered, for more than an hour. Eat from the bowl, with more sugar, if desired. The crackers should be clear, soft, and jelly-like, but not broken.

Celery is considered good for nervousness, and when cooked is said to relieve chronic

rheumatism. Cut the sticks in small pieces and boil in a little water until tender; add milk, salt, and pepper, stew for a while, and thicken slightly with flour. It can be made into a delicious soup, or poured over toast like asparagus.

“Flax-seed Lemonade: Four tablespoonfuls whole flax-seed, one quart boiling water, juice of two lemons; sugar to sweeten. Put the flax-seed in a pitcher, pour on the boiling water, cover it and let it steep three hours. When cold add the lemon juice and sugar. If too thick, thin with cold water. Let the patient have it ice-cold.”

Gruel: The most delicate and quickest way of making oatmeal gruel is to put water on the crushed oats for fifteen minutes or longer; strain off the water and boil it five minutes, stirring it constantly, adding milk or cream before taking it from the fire. This is considered by many the best food for an infant.

Rice-water may be made by cooking for a long time a little rice, or by having it boiled in water and strained through a colander, using the rice for the table. Rice should never be stirred while cooking.

Tapioca Pudding: Over one cup of tapioca pour sufficient cold water to cover it. Let it soak four hours or all night. Cook until quite *clear*, adding water if needed. Put in the juice of one lemon and sweeten. Pour into molds and eat cold; or it is nice eaten warm, without the lemon, putting on cream and sugar.

To make wine whey, stir a cup of white wine into a pint of boiling milk, and strain when cold.

MOVING AN INVALID



MOVING AN INVALID

As lifting is often too great a strain on the nurse, and excites the patient with fear of being dropped, other devices should be resorted to. In such cases, one of Sargent's "Luxury" Chairs is invaluable, as the arms are hinged so as to be raised. By slipping under the invalid a wide strip of linen and placing the chair, opened horizontally, close beside the bed, the nurse can easily draw the person, if some one will hold the head and shoulders, while a child can, if needful, move the feet, and, when all is ready, roll the chair about or into another room.

A heavy cord (maroon silk is pretty) slipped through screw-eyes, on each side of the foot-board, passing around it and brought up within reach of the hands when a person is lying

down, will be found a great assistance when trying to rise in bed. It is also a relief to pull on, in time of pain.

“In changing bed-clothes, have the fresh ones warm and all in readiness before commencing. Roll the soiled under sheet lengthwise from the edge of the bed until up against the patient. Roll the clean sheet in the same manner, leaving enough to tuck in securely along the side, and, as it were, follow up the soiled sheet with the clean. When the two rolls get as much under the patient as is possible without moving him, then gently roll the patient over on his side onto the clean sheet, and draw from under him first the soiled roll and then following closely on it the clean one. To change the upper clothes, a clean sheet and blanket should be laid on top of the soiled ones; if these are tucked in, leaving the others loose, the soiled one can be drawn away from the foot, thus preventing any exposure to cold.

Pull lower sheet *smooth* and tuck it tightly in."

When a person cannot bear the motion caused by changing the under sheets in this way, the tendency to slip down in bed will be found an advantage, and can be increased by taking the castors from the foot of the bedstead.

Unless the sheets are new, it is safer with a heavy person to have two underneath, as then the patient can by them be drawn onto a cot or pulled up in bed. As the sheet becomes short at the bottom, another can be sewed on, with a machine if convenient, and the daily drawing up will soon bring the soiled sheet at the top, where it can be ripped off. In this case two screw-eyes should be put in the foot-board, and large hooks in the mattress, to prevent its moving.

Annie R. Ramsey, in "The Ladies' Home Journal," writes:

“No patient should leave his bed until the doctor gives special permission, and then in his weak condition he should be most carefully protected against taking cold. A good plan is to spread a large quilt (or, better still, a blanket) over an easy-chair; on this the patient—properly dressed in warm flannels and woolen wrapper—is seated, and the ends and sides of the cover turned up over him and tucked about his legs. A pillow at his back, a stool under his feet, will add to his comfort. Fifteen minutes the first day is long enough to sit up, but the time should be increased a little each day—once the strength begins to come it will be regained more rapidly out of bed, but ‘to make haste slowly’ is the golden rule of this part of your nursing.

“While the patient is up, the opportunity should be seized to remake his bed, quietly but thoroughly, putting the sheets of to-day into another room to air until to-morrow, and

substituting aired ones for to-day, turning the mattress and getting rid of the under blanket and rubber sheet, if possible.

“There should always be an abundance of pillows besides the two required for the patient’s comfort, and several of them should be at hand to stuff under the back and buttocks when the patient is turned to one side, or when it becomes necessary to prop him into any position which he cannot, of his own strength, maintain. These pillows should be small ones, ‘baby pillows,’ if you have such in the house, but they are extremely useful in any size. They save the patient from the painful pressure of your hands and fingers, and by their use you keep both your own hands free for what is needed.

“In fevers one blanket is enough for warmth, since it is an old axiom that people with fevers cannot take cold; but there should always be a store of soft woolen covers close at hand and,

if possible, an eider-down quilt—for there is no knowing the hour when the temperature will fall, or when a collapse may occur, and in either case you need instantly all the artificial heat you can supply.

“SPONGE BATHS

“Many physicians order ‘sponging’ to reduce the temperature, but are not always very clear in telling you how to do it.

“A simple, quick way, is to roll the night-dress sleeves back to the shoulder, and, with a sponge wrung out in water heated to about one hundred degrees, pass rapidly over every inch of the arms thus exposed; also the face. Leave these to dry by evaporation, and do the same sponging from the hips down. Your sponge should not be wet enough to dampen the covers, and these need not be thrown off. The evaporation will rapidly cool the surface of the body, and the thermometer may mark a fall of several degrees in an hour,

but you must not be alarmed if the heat rises again as before. The temperature should be taken before sponging and half an hour afterward, and if there has been positively no fall, then the sponging should be repeated in exactly the same way.

The diet needs to be rigidly watched through convalescence, and long after the doctor has ceased to prescribe the articles to be eaten at each meal. More variety is of course allowed, and your physician will doubtless make you a list of desirable foods if you ask him. Milk, eggs, meat, and fish give greatest nourishment."

•



HINTS TO THE NURSE

HINTS TO THE NURSE

“Oh! woman— * * *
When pain and sickness wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou.”

Some grain of imagination is needed to fulfill this blessed mission; for, consider, one has to go into a different world to understand the feelings of the sick—to know the lassitude, dejection, despondency, and the magnitude of trifles.

A voice which passes unheeded to the strong, comes with jarring annoyance to the shattered nerves of the suffering one. Uniform cheerfulness should be the rule. A sick person should never be contradicted or argued with, or charged with being nervous, and no offense should be taken at anything said or done. With pain racking the poor body, one is not

responsible for the hasty word. Permit no rustling newspaper, noisy shoes, or whispering in the room, and see to it that all is done for the comfort of the invalid, with no thought on her part.

“Even though the patient is a babe or a very young child—whom many persons erroneously think cannot be injured by company because it does not know what is said—never allow conversation or unusual noises in its hearing. The little nerves are often more sensitive than in adult life, and any stir is a jar from which they shrink.”

No friend is to be considered when the welfare of the patient is concerned. If the least sign of weariness is detected, the visitor should be reminded of it. Any one who would be offended is hardly worth considering; the patient for the time being is king—the nurse an autocrat.

Those who are about the sick should be

neat and cheery in their dress, hair nicely arranged, apron *always clean*. As an invalid is usually fastidious, the nurse should be careful to show that she washes her hands before serving food, and that the towel used for glasses, etc., is taken for no other purpose.

When the patient is able to be left with the friend who comes in, the nurse should withdraw; it will give her a change and leave the friends free to converse. Then, as in every case, a call-bell should be within reach. A person, although slightly ill, should never be left to feel that there is no way of calling needed help.

It is agreeable to most patients to have the face and hands bathed, and teeth and hair gently brushed. A wash cloth of flannel is often preferred, as it does not chill, and the mouth and teeth may be washed with a soft linen cloth.

When one is unable to swallow, pieces of

linen dipped in cold water and placed between the lips will keep the mouth moist.

While it is not the purpose of this little book to give many remedies, a few suggestions may not be amiss on that dread of the nurse—bed sores. Rubbing the skin with alcohol, placing a basin of water under the bed and having a sheep-skin, fur side down, below the sheet, may prevent them; but, if they do come, it is best to dry them with Fuller's Earth. When a patient can be lifted upon it, a rubber ring will remove the pressure. In cases where it cannot be done, cushions, 16 x 5 inches, filled with hair, can be placed under each side of the back. These will be found a relief to any one lying long in bed, to put under a tired elbow, or an aching knee, or any part of the weary one that becomes tender. A nightingale wrapper, to slip on when the patient sits up in bed, can be easily made with two yards of flannel, turning

back a half square at either end to form sleeves. Some prefer a colored cambric to a white night-dress to wear during the day.

When a person has been a long time in bed, it sometimes becomes an effort to leave it, even if able. As arguments are often of no avail, and sometimes only irritate, it is well to resort to a little stratagem. Have a dainty meal put on a table by an easy-chair, and, if the patient be a woman, a bright wrapper thrown over it. This may overcome the lassitude and want of energy. At once strip the bed and keep it so all day, that no longing glance may be cast thither; and let rest be taken on a lounge. A convalescent *gains strength so much faster if in a wrapper, she lies outside the bed rather than under the covers.

If at any time the regular attendant leaves the patient with a substitute, instructions concerning medicine should be written, and not

left at the mercy of the memory; and those not in immediate use should be put aside.

It requires tact to know how much attention different persons enjoy; some like to be coddled, others wish most of all for quiet. It is not well to ask if the patient is comfortable; a position which may not look so, is, perhaps, easiest.

An experienced nurse adds: "Avoid the rattling of paper, allow *no whispering* in the room, do not rock your chair; let your movements be calm and gentle, and your face full of love and sympathy for the sick one."

All this we expect from the nurse. What shall we give in return to her? If hired, we pay the bill and think perhaps that our part is done. But money cannot compensate for patience, thoughtfulness, tenderness, and forbearance. These should be repaid in coin of the same quality.

A comfortable bed, a due allowance of sleep

in the day if night rest is disturbed; nourishing food, with a good lunch when required; a walk in the fresh air every day if possible; opportunity to visit her friends for an hour's relaxation—all these a nurse of experience will demand as her right. But we must realize that a nurse is not a machine; her nerves may be unstrung by long vigils as are those of the invalid by continued suffering, and it is a beautiful discipline even in sickness to learn to be thoughtful for others.

A WORD TO VISITORS

A WORD TO VISITORS

Always give at least a "Good-day" to the nurse; it is a simple thing to bestow on one whose life has none too much of brightness in it.

If the friend is weak, do not stay long. What little is said, let it be addressed directly to the invalid; conversation with others can be had outside. Never sit looking at a sick person except when in conversation, and then do not fail to do so. The chair should be placed half-way down from the head toward the foot of the bed.

Some persons calling on an invalid are at a loss what to say. It is well to prepare one's self with some word of cheer, a pleasant bit of news, or an amusing incident. A friend describes the influence of different visitors

during his illness in this way: "Mother would draw the curtains aside and in a hushed tone ask, 'How do you feel to-day?' 'Oh,' thought I, 'Mother fears I am going to die.' Then Auntie would come with a smiling face and her cheery 'Well, my boy, how are you this morning?' and made me feel I was not so ill after all—Auntie did not think so."

Some one has wisely said: "A cheerful face is nearly as good for an invalid as pleasant weather."

Abernethy, in his "Intellectual Philosophy," gives an anecdote showing the power of imagination. A young lady, on recovering from illness, had sunk into such a languid state that nothing could arouse or interest her. She lay perfectly indifferent to everything, until receiving a visit from one of her young friends, who said, in a cheery voice, "The eagle's nest." She opened her eyes, her face became

animated, and from that moment health returned.

During the previous summer she had joined a party of young people in an excursion among the hills. In their rambles they had found an eagle's nest which had excited their interest. On hearing the word, all the pleasant associations of the jaunt had come back to her, starting a new train of thought and arresting the torpor which was stealing over her mind.

DIVERSIONS

DIVERSIONS

With a small table one can, even while confined to the bed, engage in many pleasant pastimes. We have seen a table so long as to stretch across the bed, the legs resting upon the floor on either side. On this, beside many other things, was a zither—a delightful instrument for one unable to go to the piano.

To children, or persons of artistic taste, a box of water-colors is a source of pleasure, not only in brightening the pictures of books and papers, but in imitating the flowers as they are brought in by friends.

Scrap-books, either of pictures or gems of thought, are diverting. If it is known that these give pleasure, friends will be interested to save them for the sick one. It adds to the interest if selections are classified, having one

book for stories of animals, another with poets and authors, and so on, with perhaps pictures illustrating them. Books can be made of cambric pinked on the edge and bound together; or, by cutting out every second leaf, old account-books may be used.

Where one's fancy runs that way, it diverts the mind to knit or crochet, from bits of varied colored yarn, small squares to form an afghan. In knitting, a delicate person should not use steel needles, as they create an electric current which takes off vitality. With ivory needles wash-cloths can be knitted from soft cotton, or dish-cloths from lamp-wick. With strong, bright-colored yarn, one may knit or crochet reins which, with bells attached, will delight the children. But one must be careful not to use any needle long at a time, as all nerve force is needed to regain health.

A board 8 x 16 inches, covered with any pretty flannel material, is convenient for

an invalid while lying on the side, to write on.

Among other devices to turn the thoughts away from pain and weariness is a music-box, and a fair one can be bought for five dollars.

A bright calendar, with a cheery thought on which the mind may rest through the day, or a collection of Scripture texts in plain print; transparencies at the window, either in porcelain or cut in card-board; a sweet-voiced bird—all these are helpful; while an open fire, particularly of wood or soft coal, is, at times, the best of company.

In selecting books for an invalid, it seems needless to say they should be light in weight, of good print, and not exciting. Happy are they who have a friend to read aloud in a clear, soft voice, not too rapidly and not drawling. It is a gift which should be cultivated, for beyond almost any other accomplishment it brings pleasure to the home circle.

“A LETTER TO INVALIDS

“May I tell the ‘Shut-ins’ of eighteen months’ experience of being shut in with a broken hip?

“Having been superintendent of sewing-class work among the poor children of the city, under the auspices of the W. C. T. U., up to the time of my accident, the ladies thought the work would have to be dropped.

“As soon as it was possible to talk with them at all about it, I insisted that this should not be done. My urgency kept them at it, and I think my accident brought me in contact with more people to interest in the matter than I could have reached in health.

“Now the point is, this outside work, which I could aid with my voice alone for a while, was something for me to live for, something to think about, helping me to bear many a weary day and night of pain. It doesn’t ease pain to think about it, and yet it had to be borne, and could best be borne by having a

deep interest in something that required study and planning and management.

“Can you begin to see how all this gave me ‘outlook,’ and afforded me various kinds of employment besides? After six months of idleness, I found, with returning strength, though still confined to my chair, I could prepare the ‘overhanding’ patch-work for the beginners. This did not take much eyesight, nor did it take much to baste these into larger blocks for the next lesson of seaming when they were brought back to me; nor much, at another time, to baste bindings on handkerchiefs for hemming lessons. Further on, when I could sit up straighter, they brought me a cutting-table, and when I felt like it I could cut aprons and baste them, ready for the advancing classes. Another thing that was not as hard as reading or sewing was making scrap-books ready for Christmas for these children. People sent me catalogues from publishing houses,

old Harper's Weeklies and Bazzars, and pictures of all sorts. The trimming of these and fitting them in the scrap-books whiled away what would have been many a weary hour. I think I may safely say the occupation and interest this work has afforded has been a very great blessing to me—greater than to the cause I had so much at heart.

“So have I been kept in the circle of activities, though the change has been complete from an active participant in the every-day affairs of life to a chair, with a writing-table and work-bags always at hand. This seems paradise compared to what seemed the prospect at first of being bed-ridden and helpless.

ONE OF THE ‘SHUT-INS.’”

CONVENIENCES

CONVENIENCES

A bed-rest can be purchased, or may be made in this way: To a strip of one-half-inch wood, two inches wide and twenty-four inches long, fasten to each end two similar pieces twenty-two inches long. This forms the back. To another piece, twenty-four inches long, fasten two of sixteen inches, putting a cross-piece two inches from the open end. This lies on the bed against the head-board. Connect these with hinges. Ten inches from these, on the back piece, put with hinges two arms twelve inches long, connected by a strip of wood, and folding upward. Put notches in the sixteen-inch strips to hold the arms as they raise the back to the desired angle. Stretch over the back heavy canvas and cover it, if desired, with fancy canton flannel.

A table 24 x 16 inches, with legs eight inches

high, will be found convenient, not only to hold the tray, but for any little pastime. It is especially useful for sick children.

A nursery refrigerator can be improvised by using a box lined with zinc, which can be obtained from some grocer. On the bottom form a rack with strips of wood, to keep the ice out of the water. Covering all with a heavy blanket, or wrapping the ice in paper, will make it last longer.

When there are stairs between the invalid's room and the family, fatigue will be avoided by attaching a cord to a bell below. A bag on another cord will save steps in carrying up notes and small packages.

Among other things, there should be in a sick room:

An alcohol or kerosene lamp for heating purposes.

A feeding-cup and a small, low tumbler or bent tube, to use when reclining.

A Eureka bed-pan, the most convenient kind, as it can in some cases be used by the patient without assistance. It is more comfortable if a cap is put on, in which a piece of cotton-batting may be placed.

A spit-cup, or pieces of soft paper or bits of cloth.

Handkerchiefs of linen toweling.

A paper basin, because light to handle.

A rubber bag for hot water, or bags of bed-tick for hot stove-lids.

A fairy lamp or night tapers, for giving a soft light.

A rolling-chair can be easily made by putting wheels on the legs of an ordinary camp-chair. This is convenient, as it can be folded in a car or carriage and used in depots, etc. Durable wheels may be made by dividing a large bed-castor of *lignum-vitæ*, making the four wheels from two castors.

When one needs to be carried, a rope can

be fastened underneath the seat, forming loops on each side. These loops may be covered to match the carpet, or tied back out of sight when not in use.

SUGGESTIONS

SUGGESTIONS

“Since a cold is simply the closing of the pores of the body—of which there are seven million in number—and since most of our acute ailments follow as the direct result of such colds, it becomes a matter of vital importance to understand how these are contracted, and how they may be most easily and promptly removed

“To prevent colds, avoid all extremes of temperature, be judiciously clothed, it being safer to be comfortably cool than uncomfortably warm, and be well nourished by simple food taken in moderate quantity at regular intervals.

“To ‘break a cold’ is to reopen the closed pores, which may be done, in mild cases, by increased activity, by additional clothing, by

friction of the surface (as by the use of a flesh-brush), by going to bed, drinking water to the extent of thirst, or hot lemonade, having something warm at the feet, with sufficient clothing to promote comfort, with slight perspiration, and living very simply."

The habitual use of the flesh-brush at night is agreeable even to young children; it is cleansing, promotes circulation, and induces sleep. A person troubled with wakefulness can do nothing better than to give the limbs a brisk brushing until the skin fairly tingles.

"Persons exposed to contagious disease should protect themselves by personal cleanliness and frequent changing of inside and outside clothing. The best way to prevent the poison from being absorbed by the lungs is to have the stomach full during the period of exposure. The lungs absorb while the stomach is empty, but throw off during digestion, never absorbing while digestion is going on. While watching

at night, the nurse should take a slight lunch, such as beef-tea, or crackers and milk, every few hours." For this reason it is not well for any one to go out before breakfast, particularly in a malarial district, without first eating at least a piece of bread

"Dyspepsia is a fatigued and worn-out stomach, overtaken by too much labor in the attempt to digest too much food, or that difficulty of digestion. To remove the cause is to remove the effects, at least to a great extent. We cannot expect the best digestion unless the meals are taken with regularity, at the precise time each day, as far as possible, the food thoroughly chewed, no drink taken while eating, and fresh air breathed both day and night."

Symptoms of pneumonia or any cold on the chest are often overcome by the application of a plaster made by grating nutmeg on a piece of brown paper spread with lard.

Carrot juice is effective in cases of jaundice

or liver trouble, and also in attacks of typhoid colic. The raw carrots should be grated and pressed, and a half-cupful of the clear juice given two or three times a day. It is said that if children will eat raw carrots they will overcome any trouble from worms.

A smooth cream made from wheat-flour and water is excellent for diarrhœa. With the addition of blackberry brandy, it has been known to cure cholera infantum when no medicine could be retained.

The most gentle laxative is licorice powder—one teaspoonful at night. It may be given to young infants.

Warmth is the enemy of rheumatism, and can often overcome it. Persons affected in this way are often helped by sleeping in woolen night-clothes or between flannel sheets.

Cayenne pepper taken with meals is also good for both rheumatism and dyspepsia.

A poultice of bread and water filled with

rose-leaves is effective in overcoming a gathering of the breast.

Salt is potent in many ways: Placed between the dampened end of a strip of flannel and bound on at night, it will often relieve a sore throat.

Added to water, making it no saltier than tears, it is, when sniffed through the nose, one of the best remedies for catarrh. A little alum can be added to the salt water, or it may be alternated with a dilution of Pond's Extract.

A pinch of salt taken after each meal, or dissolved in water, will often relieve indigestion.

It is considered good to eat salt with nuts after dinner.

Some mothers add a shake of salt, rather than sugar, to a child's food, to avoid encouraging a taste for sweets.

A spoonful of lime-water, with an equal

quantity of milk, taken after meals will overcome sour stomach.

Rinsing the teeth with lime-water at night, or putting powdered chalk between them, will prevent decay; the acidity of the stomach combining with this rather than attacking the teeth.

The importance of caring for the teeth, even from *earliest infancy*, cannot be over-estimated. Upon it depends the health and appearance of our children. Brushing the teeth *night* and morning, using a tooth-pick or floss silk after meals, having the teeth early and regularly examined by a reliable dentist, that the cavities may be detected and filled before it will give pain—all these precautions will save the little ones the suffering that so many needlessly endure.

Pure extract can be obtained at little expense by taking from oranges and lemons the *yellow* part only, and covering this with alcohol for

twenty-four hours. It can then be strained into a bottle ready for use.

A person afflicted with boils may be relieved by taking tartar emetic. Put as much as can be placed on a *silver* five-cent piece into a glass of water, and take a teaspoonful after each meal.

Morning spittle is the best eye-salve.

Falling out of the hair after fever may sometimes be stopped by rubbing the scalp with salt-water for three nights, omitting it three nights, and then resuming it.

A simple remedy for chills and fevers is to take whole black-pepper corns before breakfast, beginning with nine, decreasing the number by one each day, and then, if not cured, increasing by one each day to nine.

A burn or scald should be covered with baking-soda, either dry or dissolved in water, and wrapped closely to exclude the air.

Corn-starch is the best powder for the skin.

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Gum arabic, dry or dissolved in water, will often allay a cough. It is also soothing to use in moistening the lips when parched. Borax also is cooling, and is good for a sore mouth.

The virtue of witch hazel is well known. The extract can be bought in bulk at less price than Pond's Extract. Diluted, it is the best eye-water.

Arnica can be prepared at small cost by adding alcohol to the flowers. This is also the least expensive way of making camphor.

A drop of camphor on sugar, taken when one feels chilly, will often prevent a cold. .

Blood-stains can be removed by covering the spot with moistened starch and placing it in the sun.

A whisk-broom should be kept in every bath-room. It is the neatest and most effective thing to use in cleansing vessels.

Mutton tallow put into cups when hot,

forming little cakes, is excellent for chapped hands or any irritation of the skin.

Hind's Honey and Almond Cream is one of the best preparations for burns and scalds, and can be used on the hands while doing the most delicate work.

Iced water is a delicious and wholesome drink, but not *icc*-water. Let some water boil hard, pour it into a bowl to cool, and then bottle and lay on ice. This is the only safe water to drink if the bowels are out of order. In cases where there is any question as to the healthfulness of water, it is well to boil it in this way.

Bags of salt heated, are effective, when laid upon the stomach, to remove pain.

While it is not always necessary in cases of *measles* to have a physician, great care should be taken to keep the patient warm and give him plenty of hot drinks, especially lemonade. It is well to rub the body every day with

sweet-oil. The patient should not use his eyes or have them exposed to a strong light, and he must not go out too soon.

In *mumps*, keep warm, and eat soft, nourishing food, being careful that the bowels move freely.

Unless the family is *very poor*, children should have milk to drink, at least with their supper. It is nature's food for them, and it is their right to have it. Better to dispense with some of the dainties which are only an injury to health, than deprive the little ones of what most of them crave.

Nothing can be more healthful for a child, so long as he will enjoy it, than a supper of bread and milk, and his sleep will be more quiet than after eating a variety of indigestible food. And so, if the child is healthy, keep it so by giving him milk, and if the little one is delicate, rely more on this than medicines as a restorative.

A cup of warm milk will often overcome a troublesome cough at night, or catarrhal difficulty in the morning.

In cases of nervous dyspepsia, a *diet of milk* has often in a few weeks effected a cure. If one tires of it, make a variety by rennet custard, clabbered milk, or buttermilk.

Considering how much may be done in all these ways to relieve suffering and restore health, surely, when such care is impossible, the greatest kindness one can do for the dear ones is to place them in a hospital. Particularly is this so when the invalid is in a hotel or boarding-house.

Many a life has been sacrificed for the lack of care, the impossibility of securing quiet, and the need of proper nourishment, any one of which can scarcely be found away from home except in those beneficent homes for the sick—hospitals.

A SELECTION

A SELECTION

Rather than with any words of her own, the writer would close this little book with the following from the charming work of F. McCready Harris (Hope Ledyard), "Plain Talks With Young Home-Makers." It is published by Cassell & Co., New York, and is full of useful hints to young housekeepers, and particularly to those who have the care of little children:

"Few people know how to visit in a sick-room. Let there be no anecdotes of sickness. Cull every witty saying, every bright anecdote, and take it to a convalescent as you would a beautiful flower. If there is no hope of recovery, do not deceive the patient, but let one who knows and loves the Father tell His child that word has come that he is needed. A beautiful text or Scripture-roll hung in plain sight has often proved

a 'Silent Comforter' at such times. Never forget that not only while there is life there is hope, but now '*abideth* hope.'

"Do not give a little child under eighteen months old raw fruit. Baked apples or stewed prunes are good, or the juice of an orange; a very fresh, ripe peach is safe, but a stale or unripe one may cause death within thirty-six hours. Do not give your children tea or coffee—they are both too exciting; but cocoa or chocolate is very soothing.

"The coming teeth show that baby is ready for something stronger than milk, but not for anything that happens to be for dinner. At six or nine months old he can suck a piece of rare beef, biting at it as he pleases; he can have 'Panada,' that is, stale bread with boiling water poured over it, the water drained off, milk poured over the bread, and sugar and nutmeg added. A baked (not boiled) potato agrees with some little ones, though a sweet potato is better than the ordinary Irish one. Oatmeal, milk-toast, scrambled egg, a raw egg well beaten, with milk, sugar and nutmeg; baked and boiled custard, and rice pudding, are all good and wholesome.

“Do not set your child on its feet, but wait until he pulls himself up; it is better that the child should not walk until a year old, and even eighteen months is none too late. Do not object to the child creeping—it is health and strength to your baby.

“Now as to naps. A child is happier and healthier to take a nap in the day up to six years of age; but—some children won't do it! Try to accustom your child to lie down in a darkened room for a half-hour, even if he lies awake. Give him his doll or horse to put to sleep; the quiet will do him good. In warm weather bathe the little hot face and hands, slip off shoes and stockings, and give the little one a cool drink.

“Whether your child sleep by day or not, let him be put to bed at a regular hour at night, and remember that the best hours for sleep are the ones before midnight. Most children should be put to bed by half-past seven up to seven years of age. Unless a child is particularly nervous and sickly, you can accustom him to sleep through all ordinary noises; let the talking, etc., go on as usual.

“A convalescent child is a trying patient.

Do not give him too many good things at once. One toy or book at a time, the others out of sight, is a good rule. If the child grows fretful, a good rubbing from head to foot will often induce sleep, and the child will wake refreshed and content. Remember it is no kindness to the child to allow it to be selfish and disobedient because it is ill. Have very few rules, but when you say 'must,' stand firm; do not scold, only be quietly persistent. Let medicines be taken at once, not dallied with. Whenever it is possible, change the patient from the bed to an arm-chair, if it be only long enough to beat and air the bed. And, having done all in your power, rest in the Lord. He makes no mistakes. He hears and answers our prayers as well when He denies as when He gives."

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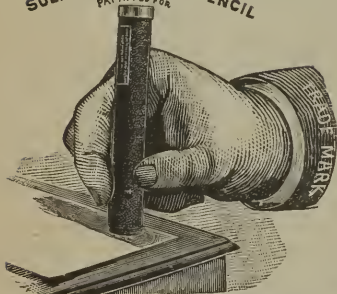
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